

## **Bill of Rights and Responsibilities**

### **Why were the song and bill of rights developed?**

The Bill of Rights and Responsibilities was developed for children and youth to help them understand what they are entitled to and what is expected of them during their stay at Children's Hospital at London Health Sciences Centre. The rights include, but are not limited to, rights to information, privacy and confidentiality, consent and choice.

The song Sincerely, A Child was created by the Children and Youth Advisory Council to enhance patient, family and health care provider understanding of the Bill of Rights and Responsibilities. Council members felt that there is greater likelihood that individuals will retain the information shared through a song than information presented solely through detailed points.

### **How did it come about?**

Hospital leaders asked the Children and Youth Advisory Council what is most important to them about how care is provided at Children's Hospital. Council members shared their positive and negative experiences through workshops and meetings. Throughout the group process, they decided to share their views further by writing the Bill of Rights and Responsibilities document and putting this information into a song, for use by patients, families, physicians and staff at Children's.

The entire project has been a collaborative group effort between Council members and staff facilitators.

### **What do we hope to accomplish?**

We hope that with this document and song, patients will gain a sense of empowerment allowing them to feel secure and comfortable asking questions of staff and coping with their hospital stay. Additionally, this initiative is intended to be a resource for physicians and staff to help improve the family centered care philosophy of Children's Hospital at LHSC.

## I have the right to...

### Be seen as a child first, and then as a patient

*Remember to keep in mind that I am a child<sup>1</sup> and that you should treat me appropriately to my age. I am different from adults and have unique needs and feelings.*

### Be called by name

*Use my name rather than “the kid with the fever” or “bed four”.*

### Know who you are, what you are doing and why

*Please take the time to introduce yourself to me, explain what you are doing and how it will help make me better. I will learn and understand my injury or condition much better if you help me do this.*

### Have your full attention when you are with me

*Please be courteous and pay attention to me when I ask questions or when you are talking with me. I want to know that you care.*

### Be treated as a unique individual

*Not everyone is the same. I have my own likes, dislikes, abilities, culture, spirituality and language. If you don't know something, please ask me. This way, everyone's needs are met.*

### Have my privacy respected

*No matter what age I am, sometimes I need to be alone. It is important that you don't break confidentiality and that you understand I may have secrets.*

### Be prepared for procedures and how I may feel afterwards

*I want to know what will happen to me and what kinds of restrictions tests or procedures will include. If I can't eat before a procedure, I want to know when I have to stop eating a few days in advance. I want to know what a test or procedure involves so we can prepare for it.*

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<sup>1</sup> Child refers to anyone under the age of 18

#### Ask questions and get answers I understand

*I want to be able to ask you questions about my care so I can learn. The answers I get should reflect my level of understanding as well, so there is no confusion between us.*

#### Have my suggestions heard

*If I share something I see that can be improved please know that I'm not trying to be critical of your work, I want to make my stay at the hospital better.*

#### Share my feelings

*Be empathetic when I voice my emotions. During stressful times like these, I will want others to understand and comfort me.*

#### Have a support person with me

*Whether they are friends or relatives or support workers, I don't want to be alone during a scary procedure. Having that hand to hold provides safety and comfort for me.*

#### Know my choices when my caregiver is not available

*As a child, I may not always be able to make the same decisions as adults but I want to make some choices. I want to be informed when I can make these choices.*

## I have the responsibility to...

Be respectful of providers

*I will treat the health care provider with dignity and respect*

Be honest and open with providers

*I will be honest when I ask questions so my treatment plans are made with all of the information.*

Ask questions so that I understand

*I will ask questions so I know what is going on and understand what you are doing.*

Learn about my treatment plan

*I will take the time to learn about my injury or condition.*

Be involved in making decisions about my care

*Together with my guardians and caregivers, I will participate in making choices and decisions about my care.*

Maintain healthy habits

*I will do my best to continue healthy habits so I recover quickly and stay healthy. This includes bathing, eating, sleeping right and exercise if possible.*

Play, learn and be a kid

*If possible, I will play to be healthy physically and mentally. I will continue learn and grow so I do not fall behind my peers.*

***“I will not let the identity of ‘patient’ eclipse my true self” – Steven, McLean, Founding Member, Children and Youth Advisory Council***